1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

the taxes raised in the district and they meet primarily to discuss the dispensation of these funds. Usually this has to do with items of local improvement such as market stalls in various villages in the district, radios for hamlets and villages, etc. They also draft resolutions asking the emirate government for help in extending roads, building wells, and so on.

The official representative from the capital—previously from the colonial government, now the local government department of the emirate—who attends the meetings provides a link between this group and the central government in Maiduguri. He advises them on what is and what is not feasible in terms of their requests to the central government and also informs them of long-range development policies and plans by the central emirate government.

So far these councils are quite weak. They meet only a few times a year and have a very limited function. However as time goes on they could assume the role of a local legislative and administrative body made up of people who represent the developing needs of ordinary people to participate in decisions affecting their own local areas.

During the last decade or so another form of political activity has come to Bornu in the form of political parties. The traditional authorities, the district heads, lawans, judges, officials of the Native Authority, and all their followers, support the N.P.C. (Northern Peoples Congress) which represents similar interests in other parts of Northern Nigeria and forms the dominant element in the federal government of Nigeria. Several days a week in various parts of Maiduguri, but only rarely in rural areas, public meetings are held under the green flag of the N.P.C. Meetings are usually preceded by drumming and traditional dancing by divorced women. Then party organizers make speeches to the assembled crowds. Sometimes the "big men" such as the district heads or Native Authority Councilors attend these meetings especially around election time, but they themselves and candidates for office do not speak. To do so is considered demeaning for the "big men." Instead party organizers give long, loud harangues extolling the virtues of the N.P.C. and go into great detail about the evils propagated by other political parties in Nigeria.

The overall effect of these political meetings is one of tradition versus its breakdown, good versus evil, ethnic and religious unity and loyalty versus disunity and disloyalty. The real, everyday authority in the lives of the people obviously supports the N.P.C. Thus a vote against this party means much more than a simple political decision to support one contending group of leaders against another; it means that the person is turning against the traditional political structure of the society, and by inference that moral order that holds it together. Listeners at the meetings are constantly presented with moral choices; "are you against our own chiefs, the district heads, lawans, our Shehu?—well *they*, the opposition parties, are; are you against wives being obedient to their husbands?—well *they* are; are you against children being obedient to their parents?—well *they* are," and so on. Stories are told of people whose parents were fine and upstanding citizens who supported and were supported by their leaders. Then their children ran away and supported opposition parties having first rejected the authority, love, affection and support of their own parents. Such people are now vagrants with no families, no proper connections to a respectable Kanuri household, no place in society, and no proper place in the

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

665 social and moral life of the community. It is prophesied that morality and family
• 208 life as it is now known could be destroyed if opposition parties ever came to
[186] power. Finally, it is always pointed out that opposition parties represent the Southern Nigerians and that a vote for such a group is a vote against Islam, the true religion, and a vote for paganism covered by a thin cloak of Christianity.

665 During the 1950s when there was an active local opposition party in Bornu
175 under a Kanuri leader, attitudes to the opposition were more clearly seen. The Brit-
578 ish colonial officials dealt mostly with senior Kanuri members of the Native Au-
648 thority. Both the British and these Kanuri leaders had an abhorrence of disorder,
[563] riots, or activities that could lead to such disturbances. It was thought that allowing Southern Nigerians to organize branches of their own party locally was one thing
[579] but having a Kanuri opposition party was quite another. Events proved them correct, for in 1958 riots broke out in Maiduguri between supporters of the N.P.C. and the Bornu Youth League. The ins and outs of these riots need not concern us here, but from that time on the B.Y.L. was crushed. Many of its local leaders fled
[167] to other parts of Nigeria or to neighboring Chad to reappear several years later and eventually to become loyal N.P.C. supporters. Today although other Nigerian parties are represented in Bornu, their supporters and local organizers are all non-Kanuri. Thus the emirate government is linked to Nigerian party politics through a one-party organization which represents the traditional authority system of the emirate.

665 The party and its place as a dominant element in Nigerian politics means
648 that Kanuri leaders have open to them regional and federal appointments. There are Kanuri in the federal cabinet and in the various federal ministries. Up until January 1966, the political head of the N.P.C. and the Premier of the northern region was the Sarduana of Sokoto, and the Governor was Sir Kashim Ibrahim, the former Waziri of Bornu.[1] The old nineteenth century balance of power in this region between the empires of Bornu and Sokoto still remain, then, and both must be represented in the leading positions of this, the largest region of Nigeria.

642 In summary, Kanuri political organization is basically structured along the
105 lines set up by the colonial era which were built onto those of pre-colonial times.
178 As the emirate has developed a need for more modern political structures these have appeared and are continuing to appear as the society changes towards more modernization and the accumulation of social and economic development. Within this structure modes of behavior are still largely traditional as are the values and political ideology that give the present system its immediate and long range goals. Whether or not modernism and its values will eventually produce a clash with tradition or whether the change will continue to be as smooth and incremental as it has in the past is one of the key questions for the future.

[1] As this is being written the politics of Nigeria, and in all probability its constitutional make-up, are being changed by the effects of the military take-over of the federal government which occurred in January, 1966.

651 cal labor involved. Digma, on the other hand, has moved into
634 the district which Yerima left, so that the contrast between
663 the two is particularly marked. Taxes have constantly been
156 declining in his district, and he is continually suspected of embezzling tax money--otherwise how else can one explain the meager sums brought in from such a prosperous district? The threat of investigation and dismissal hovers over Digma, a
[208] nervous and suspicious man to begin with. He is not liked in his district, is not a generous man, and has few kabuna under him. Consequently he is driven to go out and to collect the taxes himself, but the job is far more than one man could ever accomplish and he has only increased worries to show for his efforts. Every failure of Digma's recalls the memory of Yerima, who was respected and liked, who was generous, and who per-
634 formed so well as Ajia. Yerima's success in this as in so
663 many things derives from his keen insight into the traditional
554 social structure and his ability to adapt and use traditional
156 means to achieve his ends. The manner in which he maintains a large corps of kabuna, many of them slaves, and uses their services to his advantage while at the same time fulfilling all the obligations of a great aristocrat, are an illustration of this. Digma on the other hand is unable to act the part of a traditional aristocrat, and constantly lives in fear of those above him.

651 One way of handling the problem of inducing Fulani Ardos
634 to come into a district while at the same time taxing their
563
662

632 571 If the Lawan moves to another town, or is dismissed, the persons who are his tada move with him, while his tala (peasants) wait patiently for a new Lawan to collect taxes and to settle their disputes.

632 871 Wisely, the Lawan's son in Magumeri stays out of any active leadership role in his father's organization. His job as the adult education (literacy) organizer for the District of Magumeri, keeps him travelling much of the time and he never interferes with the political organization which he may one day inherit. During the entire period of the field trip he was never once observed taking any role of power and authority towards any of his father's followers, all of whom treated [554] him with deference. His father is one of the few enthusiastic supporters of adult education and enforces its innovation quite vigorously in his own jurisdictional area, since he knows that this will raise his son's political respectability in the Bornu N.A.(1)

632 423 [622] All land use rights in the village area except hereditary usufruct are vested in the Lawan. However, dispensation of land use rights can, in practice, be carried out by Hamlet Heads within the hamlet boundaries, although all such decisions must be cleared with Lawan 632 before their final validation. The Lawan is also approached and told of all land rentals which he witnesses. As noted before he is paid a fee for witnessing marriages and ratifying divorces, and he hears and tries disputes involving his peasants. Indeed most peasants feel more secure about any decisions they have made affecting their neighbours

[208] (1) The Magumeri Village Area peasants are nevertheless not responding very keenly to adult education. They find Lawan's enthusiasm for literacy rather confusing, since one of the main propaganda themes given to innovators by the N.A. (designed by the British) is the alleged skill that literacy gives the peasants in ascertaining whether or not their tax receipts actually correspond to their payments. The fact that it is the Lawan who taxes them - and overtaxes them they believe - and he as well who prods them to learn to read, is one reason why they are mistrustful of the literacy campaign.